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A D D R E S S
OF THE
PRESIDENT,
THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,
AT A MEETING OF THE
SOCIETY FOR TRAINING TEACHERS OF THE DEAF
AND
Diffusion of the "German" System in the United Kingdom,
HELD BY
His Grace's PERMISSION IN
THE LIBRARY, LAMBETH PALACE,
JUNE 28TH, 1877.

JAMES MARTIN, PRINTER, 9, LISSON GROVE, N.W.

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT.

I MUST apologise for not having been present at the beginning of this meeting, but as you will readily believe a great many duties devolve upon me at all times, and especially at this time of the year, which make it impossible for me always to be where I could wish to be. I have no personal acquaintance with the system that has been recommended to you today, further than having many years ago in Germany seen a tentative effort, conducted by a good man whose name is well known in England as well as in Germany—Pastor Friedner. I remember some forty years ago he showed me a small branch of his great Institution in which this system was carried on. I presume since those days the system has been mastered and brought to greater perfection than was attained at that time. But even at that time there appeared no doubt that in the examples which he brought under my notice, the elements of a system existed which was likely to prove highly beneficial to this distressed class of the community. You have heard no doubt of the different efforts that have been made at times to communicate instruction to the deaf and dumb, under the different systems, and I know that Mr. Ackers has his heart fully enlisted in this particular effort. I know that he may even be considered enthusiastic in favour of this effort—in the best sense of the word enthusiastic—but I am glad to see from the paper he has placed in my hand, no proof that enthusiasm will so run to seed as to prevent other systems also having fair play, and that the doctrine laid down in it is this—that having to deal

with a great evil which afflicts the human race, we are anxious to use every method that may be suggested for mitigating that evil: and if it be proved as perhaps it may be proved, that there are some particular cases of the deaf and dumb for whom this system is less suited than it is for others, there is no jealousy on the part of the promoters of this system against other systems which may be more suited to particular cases than this system is. The desire of those who are promoting this object, is if possible, to place the deaf and dumb in the same position as other people whom God has blessed with the power of hearing and of speech. And there can be no doubt that where this system is successful, it does confer greater advantages than can be obtained by the system which enables them to communicate with others by their fingers. By its adoption, the sense of their great infirmity will be much more removed than it can be by any other system which marks their infirmity at the very moment it suggests a remedy, for the sufferings under which they labour. I am struck by this fact which was mentioned, and which I think grows with all our experience of human beings—that the deaf and dumb are liable to certain peculiar moral evils, that a sort of suspiciousness is not unlikely to grow up in their minds. We all know how a nation of slaves soon exhibits in its moral defects the evils of the slavery under which it suffers. We know that almost every physical evil under which the human race can labour produces some moral effect upon those who are afflicted by it, and therefore in our endeavour to remedy this evil, which for some wise purpose God has allowed to afflict certain members of the human race, it is of great importance that where the thing is possible, we should desire to give them not only the means of escaping by some contrivance from the evils under which they suffer, but that we should endeavour to place them as much as possible on an equality in all respects with their

fellow-men. The object we should endeavour to accomplish is, that a deaf and dumb person shall be as little as possible distinguishable from any other person, and therefore, whatever there may be to show their infirmity, should as much as possible be removed; that I think is a great recommendation in favour of this as compared with other systems.

I find it mentioned also in the paper which has been placed in my hands, that the number of persons who suffer under this calamity is very considerable indeed, and I suppose it may be taken for granted, that a very large proportion of those who suffer are of the poorest class. We have been engaged during the past few years in great efforts about education, and I have heard it said, only yesterday, by a great authority, that probably in the course of a few years there would not be a human being in England who could not pass a respectable examination in certain elementary matters of education. But if there be so large a number of deaf and dumb persons of the poorest class of the community, I am afraid it will baffle the skill of even the best teachers, without some such aid as this institution seeks to give, to raise them to the standard of common knowledge of the commonest kind, such as we hope will soon be spread among the poorest of our population. It is said, that there are at the present time 10,000 persons deaf and dumb who receive no instruction at all, and I do not quite understand how they can receive any instruction. A few of those may be selected by the guardians, and at considerable expense to the parish, they may send them to some of the existing institutions, but surely there must be some general effort on the part of the whole community before we can meet the evil. Ten thousand persons is but a small number, out of 30,000,000; but it is a considerable body of persons, and it will be a disgrace to this country, if in the course of the next few years, some distinct efforts are not made to enable these ten thousand

mutes of the lowest class of society to receive a proper education, and perhaps the most ready and the clearest method of diffusing education amongst them is that which we are met here to-day to advocate. I presume that it is so simple that, with certain preliminary arrangements, it is only this, that every one who speaks to them must speak with deliberation. Now perhaps in the interest of those who are not mutes this is a great advantage. If we could induce the whole of our ministry to speak distinctly, I think there would be a better attendance at our churches. If the system of mumbling, or whatever other way there may be which prevents people from being heard, were abandoned, I think we should become a more intelligent nation. I have observed in this metropolis, that our brethren from America generally speak with boldness and readiness, which is an example to us who live in this "worn out old country." Englishmen all over the world speak as if they are ashamed of what they are speaking about, and in this consists the difficulty experienced in learning foreign languages. But what you are trying to inculcate is, that those who are not mutes should speak so that even the deaf can understand them from the movement of their lips, and in thus doing good to others we shall be doing good to ourselves. It is said that these 10,000 deaf and dumb persons are neglected, and are uninstructed in the commonest principles of morality. I do not know how it can be otherwise if we have no possible means of communicating with them. Take the best view you please of the natural condition of the human race, and there is something that prevents people without instruction knowing the difference between right and wrong, and if you leave them altogether without instruction, you must leave them with a very vague notion indeed of their duty in this life, or in their relation to the life hereafter. No one can have gone into remote villages and seen what is called the parish idiot—

who is no more an idiot than many of his neighbours—who is nothing more than a deaf or dumb person neglected from his youth ;—no one can have seen such a person in remote districts and observed how difficult it is to give him any conception of the existence of God, and the difference between what will please and what will not please Him, without feeling that if any special means of instruction could be adopted, capable of being conveyed into every parish in the kingdom, great good would be accomplished. We learn a good deal from Germany. In the whole of Germany deaf and dumb persons are subject to the compulsory laws, which force all the children, born in the country, to be educated ; and I hope that in the compulsory system of education which is coming into effect this year, this matter will not be forgotten with regard to the deaf and dumb. We ought to remember, that there is no portion of our people, however tried by misfortune, for whom the laws of a Christian community are not bound to provide a sound useful education. One of the speakers touched upon a point of incalculable importance, viz., that the rights of religion cannot of course be communicated by people speaking upon their fingers, except in the case of those who have been educated on that system. If there is a deaf and dumb man in a remote part of Wales, you cannot have a curate expressly for his benefit, therefore it is of the greatest importance that the deaf and dumb man should be able to follow the speaker without the intervention of mechanical means. This is the only system which it appears can be spread throughout the whole community, and in cases of sickness and sorrow, when it is impossible to find any one to speak with his fingers, it is an incalculable blessing.

It will be an incalculable blessing, that in the future we may be able with a little trouble, so to address the deaf and dumb man in the sick room, as to prepare him for that which

lies before him at the moment of death. At the moment of death this distinction will disappear. Those who have suffered the most under this calamity while life lasts, will be delivered from it when they go into the presence of their Saviour; and it is well that we should be preparing them to use in His presence, clearly and distinctly, those voices which have been silent during the many years of their suffering.

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| Somerset, Mrs. Henry ... | 0 | 10 | 6 | W. S. M. | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Stanton, A. J., Esq., M.P. ... | 1 | 1 | 0 | Young, C. Baring, Esq. ... | 100 | 0 | 0 |

SOCIETY FOR TRAINING TEACHERS OF THE DEAF, AND

Diffusion of the "German" System in the United Kingdom.

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The following have also expressed their approval of the Scheme.

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REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

August, 1877.

THIS Society, which was formally established by a resolution passed at a Meeting held by permission of the Lord Mayor, at the Mansion House, on Monday, the 18th of June last, and presided over by the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, is the result of the exertions of a gentleman, who having the misfortune himself to have a child stricken with deafness a few months after birth, set himself to seek how best he could, by education, counteract the effects of this misfortune, and enable her to take her place in the world. With this view, accompanied by his wife, he visited the principal institutions of this country, America, and Europe, examining also the conditions of the pupils in after life, and was struck with the inferiority of the education afforded by the "French" System (Signs) as compared with that given by the "German" System (Lip Reading and Articulation). This latter method was first reduced to a system at Leipzig, in 1778; is now universal in Germany; is largely practised in Austria, Holland, Italy, and Switzerland; is spreading in France, Sweden, Russia, and the United States, and has within the last few years been introduced into England.

It is, however, at present impossible to obtain any instruction outside the walls of two or three small private schools, and one public institution, for want of trained Teachers.

The gentleman before alluded to, being obliged to procure a governess from abroad for his own child, associated himself with some friends in the endeavour to organize a Society for Training English Teachers, with a view to render it possible both to supply the demand for Governesses in private families, and to establish County Schools for the Poor throughout England, which in course of time shall remove the reproach from the deaf that they are necessarily dumb, and in consequence unable to associate freely with their fellow men.

In the first instance it is proposed to establish a Training College for a limited number of Teachers, with a small Practising School attached, composed of deaf children, in which all the branches of a sound English education, together with moral and religious instruction, will be given.

The Committee have much pleasure in announcing that they have succeeded in obtaining the services of an English gentleman carefully trained in Germany, to act as Principal.

It is not proposed to expend any money in Building; but for the provision of the necessary Furniture and School Apparatus, Salaries, and General Expenses for the first two years, it is considered that about £5,000 will be required. It is hoped that the College may by that time be self-supporting, and that it will become a centre from which should spring up Schools in all parts of the United Kingdom,—the necessary Teachers, information and advice being furnished by the Parent Society, Local Funds and Local Bodies doing the remainder of the work.

There are in this country alone 20,000 deaf and dumb.

It is estimated that of these 10,000 are totally uneducated; 4,000 are of a suitable age for receiving instruction; 2,000 of this number are collected in existing Schools (100 of them only being taught on the "German" System); the remaining 2,000, between the ages of five and fifteen years, are wholly unaccounted for; and, with the exception of the children of wealthy parents, growing up entirely uneducated. Even wealthy parents have no satisfactory means of educating their deaf children, simply from want of competent Teachers.

It cannot be doubted that the opportunity of educating the deaf will be readily seized both by public bodies and private persons, when once it is understood that under proper instruction the deaf can be taught to speak with ease, and to see with their eyes, understandingly, the spoken words of those around them.

Such is the practice under the "German" System which refuses to recognize the condition of dumbness in a child of healthy brain development, whether born deaf or rendered so by accident or disease, but gives language by means of lip-reading and articulation; instead of that imperfect method of communication which, limited to signs and the manual alphabet, is generally pursued in England.

The "German" System is particularly adapted to the wants of the poor, as it enables them to make their way in the world so much better than those who are unable to use and understand spoken language.

In aid of the objects of this Society, a Meeting was held by the kind permission and good will of the Archbishop of Canterbury in the library of his Palace, Lambeth, on the 28th day of June last, at which the following Resolutions were carried unanimously:—

- 1.—"That this Meeting approves the proposed establishment of a Training College for Teachers of the deaf on the 'German' System."
- 2.—"That this Meeting views with great satisfaction the effort now being made by this Society to give to every deaf child throughout the country the blessings of a good education."
- 3.—"That this Meeting pledges itself to use its best endeavours to assist in carrying out the objects of this Society."

The Committee earnestly hope that all who are interested in this subject will not only contribute largely in funds, but aid in spreading the knowledge amongst their friends of what is being done, will refer to the Committee all persons who from any cause feel a special interest in this good work, and so materially assist in the effective carrying out of the undertaking.

Subscriptions and Donations to be paid to the Bankers—

Messrs. ROBARTS, LUBBOCK, and Co., 15, Lombard Street, E.C.;

SIR SAMUEL SCOTT, Bart., and Co., 1, Cavendish Square, W.;

Messrs. PRAED and Co., 189, Fleet Street, E.C.; or,

Messrs. HOPKINSON and SONS, 3, Regent Street, St. James's, S.W.

All other communications to be addressed to the Honorary Secretary, at Prinknash Park, Painswick, Gloucestershire, who will be happy to afford every information, or to the Principal, at the College

